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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SOURCE Newspapers as indicated

COMMUNISTS SEEK TO CHANGE  
OR USE TIME-HONORED CUSTOMS

MOON CAKES CARRY PROPAGANDA -- Shanghai, Hsin-wen Pao, 23 Sep 50

With the approach of the Autumn Festival, 26 September, which comes on the 15th day of the eighth moon according to the lunar calendar, the culture and education committee of Chiang-shan, Chekiang, called together the confectioners of the town for a conference. The aim was to induce the trade to discard the old feudal and superstitious mottoes that in times past decorated the moon cakes and wrappings, such as "Honor and Longevity," "May the Lord of Heaven Give Happiness," etc.; and substitute therefore emblems such as five-point stars and the hammer and sickle and modern maxims such as "Preserve World Peace," "Liberate Taiwan." A total of 12 designs were suggested. The bakers agreed to the proposal.

AUSTERITY AND CUSTOM CLASH -- Shanghai, Hsin-wen Jih-pao, 20 Sep 50

To conserve the results of a bountiful harvest the Communist local committee of Lin-an, Chekiang, started, on 11 September, an austerity movement. In their directive, they pointed out that with a very good harvest this year, some localities are apt to indulge in wasteful eating and spending, with slaughter of animals and festivities in honor of the Buddhist divinities. For example on 6 September, a certain shrine was thronged with hundreds of worshippers who brought gifts of fish and meat which afterwards they consumed in great extravagance.

The reason for these doings is not merely the remnants of backward superstition, but also a failure on the part of peasants to understand the land reform. Another principal factor is the spreading of rumors by Kuomintang special agents. Poor peasants eat up what they have, expecting a slice of land when land reform is carried out; medium peasants fear they cannot reap what they have in the fields; rich peasants, fearing division of the land, want to enjoy life

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while they can. Therefore, it is very necessary to institute a strict austerity program, to attack superstition and start educational propaganda on land-reform policies, and to guard against and expose subversive activities. However, rigid commands must be avoided in mobilizing for austerity; the work must be done through a realistic educational approach.

Similar conditions are true in Sung-yang, Chekiang. For instance, in the Ch'e-han village of 300 families, in one day five hogs were slaughtered and all the meat sold (averaging one catty per day per family. Ordinarily, 300 catties a day could not be disposed of in both city and country markets, while on market-days, sales would be something like 1,000 catties. But recently, more than 2,500 catties of pork were sold on a market day. Formerly, one catty of pork would be exchanged for 4 catties of rice; now the rate has risen to 8 and 10 catties of rice, with the supply undiminished. In the Ch'i-k'ou village, the entire population numbering about 100 families burned about 1,000 catties of joss-paper, costing 600 yuan per catty, during one festive day.

The people say, "This is a time-honored festival, on which, after having harvested the new grain, we show reverence to our great ancestors." This proves that a part of the population forget that the new grain is the fruit of hard toil through all seasons and all kinds of weather; so they just squander it. The chief reasons for this prodigality are: (1) Kuomintang agents start rumors, "tax-grain is to be heavier this year than last, by 20-30 catties per mou"; "live a day at a time, if you don't eat and wear clothes, you are a fool"; (2) cadres neglect their duty of leadership for austerity, reasoning that the masses have been instructed during all the days of hard toil and now that they have good harvests, they would not easily throw away their gains.

PEIPING TO PUBLISH NEW ALMANAC -- Hong Kong, Hsin-sheng Wan-pao, 23 Sep 50

The Peiping Radio has announced that Chinese farmers are to have a new official almanac. For generations the rural classes have consulted the almanac before entering upon new experiences, such as taking a journey, building a house, marriage, burial, etc., somewhat as one would consult a fortuneteller. The new almanac will contain useful information about health, the new marriage law, letter writing, amusements, etc. The new almanac is a project of a Peiping social studies group and the printers' cooperative.

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